The Nasturtium

THE MASSACHUSETTS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

1974 YEARBOOK ISSUE WITH REPORTS FOR 1973 AND EARLY 1974

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The year 1973 was not, perhaps, the "Brightest and the Best", to quote the title of a recent political book. It did, however, bring into focus many hazy pictures and dreams, and from these brighter and clearer images we can move forward to a different but more constructive future.

The generous offer of a beautiful estate in Hamilton made to us by Forrester A. Clark, father of our former President, had a temporarily divisive influence on the Board of Trustees. More important, it placed President Clark in such an embarrassing position that he felt he could no longer continue in office with his usual ebullient enthusiasm. At about the same time, during the summer months, Carlton Lees submitted his resignation as Executive Director. Carlton's host of friends will be pleased to learn that he is now Vice-President of the New York Botanical Garden.

In August the Board, with complete unanimity, set out to establish courses of action which would reorient our operations and eventually build a stronger, more vital Society with a stronger and more numerous membership. This was done and the preliminary studies, approved by the Board, were published in my letter to the membership of October 30, 1973. Since that time further refinements have been studied and steps taken to implement these plans. At the same August meeting, it was agreed unanimously that HORTICULTURE magazine and the annual Spring Show would be vigorously continued. We already have a better magazine, operating at a better profit, and Willard Hunnewell, as Chairman of the Publications Committee, will report on its operations. He has spent countless hours and, with a strong assist from Jack Ewell, has pointed the former down curve strongly upward.

Mr. Ewell, our Treasurer, will give you the details of our financial progress. Our limited fund raising effort fell short of the previous year, but this should be no surprise to those who are aware of a deteriorating national economic confidence and the fears of some members that we could not cope with our problems.

The Spring Shows of both 1973 and 1974 were aesthetic, popular and profitable successes. For the latter especially Bill Thompson deserves many accolades; his execution as Show Director with powerful assistance from Allan McLeod, the Show Staff, the Amateur Horticultural Committee, the Women's Exhibition Committee and many others, should have special recognition for excellence in performance. An attempted combination Home and Garden Show at Commonwealth Pier in the fall was not a solid success, but we suffered no financial loss of any consequence and received many compliments for our efforts from the limited number of people who attended.

Nathan Chandler and an extremely hard-working Nominating Committee have also devoted time far beyond normal schedules to conduct a search for the leadership manpower we need. While we have strengthened the Board with capable new members, we have not been successful in locating an Executive Director to take on the burdens of the Society. We know the kind of man or woman we want, and will somehow find the right person—be the person Mr., Mrs., Miss or Ms. In the meantime, Bill Thompson has been appointed Acting Executive Director. I feel sure that the affairs of the Society are in good hands and that real progress may be made toward a rejuvenated Society with an exciting program at a new site, altogether a package which will prove an optimistic challenge to the right Executive Director. A new Educational Programs Committee has already been established, with Mrs. Ralph P. Engle, Jr., as Chairman; you will be hearing more from her later.

A word of warning is in order, however. Many new ideas are being expressed by involved people. A new Director, if he is worth his salt, will have more. The year 1974 is not 1829, when Boston's population was 60,000, nor is it 1900 when the present Hall was built 'way out in the Fenway. This is a long way of saying that all of us, Trustees and members, must be ready and willing to accept new concepts and new ideas.

I must thank our present staff, all of whom have been absolutely wonderful in carrying on in the face of confusion and conflicting ideas. My especial personal thanks go to Jean Landron and Warren Colby, without whom progress would have come to a grinding halt. And I must thank the loyal Executive Committee—Willard Hunnewell, Jack Ewell and Nat Dane—who have pitched in on every occasion when called for, ever moving forward. I will never forget the loyalty they have shown to the Society in the face of totally unforeseen emergencies.

In 1973 Mrs. Frances C. Dowd joined our staff as Librarian, after the retirement of Mrs. Crossman. We also

welcomed Pegze von Moschzisker as Activities Coordinator and Miss Geraldine Dunbar as Library Assistant. A more recent addition is Miss Jennifer King, that pleasant voice on the telephone.

May we look back on a year of transition, of building firm bases from which our glorious old Society may grow in stature and, especially, in the vital educational areas where so many people need to learn so much.

Joseph W. Lund
Acting President

TREASURER'S REPORT

My comments are limited strictly to financial matters and are based on a comparison of the Society's financial statements for the years ending December 31, 1973 and December 31, 1972.

The year 1973 was a good one for the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, and a very pleasant change from several years ago; in fact, we showed a net profit for the second consecutive year and an increase of some $21,000 over last year. The actual net profit was $63,000, compared to $42,000 in 1972. In almost all categories an improvement was shown. Membership dues and contributions increased $3,500. Program activities, which include both HORTICULTURE and the Spring Show, improved by $42,000, showing an excess of revenue over expenses of $131,000 as opposed to $89,000 in 1972.

Due to a change in investment philosophy—looking for growth rather than income—and also reflecting the poor performance of the stock market, investment income was $11,000 less in 1973 than in 1972. In another area rental income from the building was down by about $5,000, but this was more than offset by the reduction of $17,000 in building expenses, primarily because of the savings experienced in use of a security system rather than 24-hour guard service.

Another indication of our improved condition is the amount of our loan. At year-end 1972 we were covering a loan of $210,000. At year-end 1973 it was down to $175,000 and I am pleased to report that, currently, it has been reduced to $100,000.

We have had our struggles and moments of apprehension. Now, thanks to a lot of hard work by Staff and Trustees—and maybe a little luck—we seem to be out of our financial troubles and headed in the right direction.

John W. Ewell
Treasurer

HORTICULTURE REPORT

The year 1973 was a good one for HORTICULTURE magazine. From a financial point of view, using the accrual system of accounting, it made $122,000 over expenses, compared with some $80,000 in 1972. There were several reasons: an improved subscriber renewal rate, with more readers renewing after initial subscriptions; reduced circulation expense, which is closely related because less promotion for subscribers is necessary if renewals are satisfactory; and a substantial increase in advertising income.

At the beginning of 1973 a number of Trustees and members were concerned about the unearned income the magazine had taken in—money realized on subscriptions for magazines which would have to be supplied well into the future. Improved computer programming procedures provided the information that this liability was in the vicinity of $600,000, which led to even more concern and some pressure to sell the magazine. Last August, however, as a result of the improved financial situation, the Board voted strongly not to take any such action. That improvement is continuing, and, I believe, will continue. Incidentally, future subscription liability is taken into account under the present accrual system of accounting for HORTICULTURE, and is included in the figures mentioned above.

The Publications Committee has for some time felt the need of a professional publisher on the staff. For several years an independent publisher served as a consultant, but the arrangement was not satisfactory and that contract was terminated last fall. In March of 1974, Robert J. Fibkins joined the staff as Publisher. A Harvard graduate, he received his M.B.A. from Harvard in 1960, spent five years with Time, Inc., and more recently has been General Manager and Chairman of the Publishing Board of *Sail* magazine, which has been published very successfully here in Boston. We are very happy to have Mr. Fibkins with us. As for the future, a great deal depends on the good work we expect from him.

I would like to thank all of the staff who have contributed to this greatly improved performance of the magazine. My sincere thanks too go to John W. Ewell, who has worked with me on the Publications Committee and who has contributed a great deal of time and effort to HORTICULTURE.

Willard P. Hunnewell
Chairman, Publications Committee

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The total membership on December 31, 1973 was 5,719 as compared with 5,494 at the end of 1972. During the year 981 new members were added, an increase of 381 over the 1972 figure of 600.

Membership income increased from $84,294 in 1972 to $87,759 in 1973. Although this year's events are not part of the report for 1973, I do wish to report that the rate of new memberships continues to increase. Since the beginning of the year we have added 736 new members and the total membership now stands at 6,268. This is due in large measure to the fine work of our Membership Secretary, Mrs. Margaret Woolley.

Mary W. (Mrs. Samuel H.) Wolcott
Chairman, Membership Committee

PROGRAM REPORT

For everyone involved with the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, 1973 was a tumultuous year. Fluctuations between great hopes and bitter disappointments brought confusion and much indecision concerning a direction for the future and a course of action for the present.

In August of 1973 a new Program Committee was established under the chairmanship of Mrs. Ralph P. Engle, Jr. That committee analyzed the Society's current program, made a series of recommendations toward a future goal, then plunged ahead to implement the program. Some of the results to date have been dramatic, and for this reason my report will not be based only on the calendar year 1973 but will bring us to the present, May 6, 1974.

The Program Committee recommendations stressed increased public exposure as essential to our future growth and development. The Horticultural Society's shows and exhibitions are obviously the most impressive public demonstrations of what we are all about.

The 1973 New England Spring Garden and Flower Show drew more than 87,000 visitors from all over New England. Final figures for the 1974 Show are not yet available, but it is

already evident that we topped last year's attendance and brought in welcome revenue for the support of other program activities.

In 1973 the Society also participated in a Fall Home Improvement and Modern Living Show. While the show was a disappointment attendance-wise, it helped us to realize the important part volunteers can play in the functioning of the Society. For the nearly 100 hours the show was open, volunteers helped the staff to man a garden information booth and bulb planting workshop. The venture was underwritten by New England Exhibitions, so there was little financial loss involved. For 1974, we are investigating the possibility of a Harvest Show of a more traditional and popular nature.

The 1973 Camellia and Daffodil Shows each brought about 400 people into Horticultural Hall, but the Christmas Fair drew nearly 2,000. We also reached an estimated 35,000 people with the Rose Show held in the Natick Mall.

The library and the garden information center are permanent visible parts of our overall program. Together, they act as sources for horticultural information we cannot deliver in exhibitions or classes, and serve a public we cannot always reach by other means.

During 1973 the library showed a great increase in circulation: 5,475 books went to 1,200 borrowers in 22 states, Canada and England. Telephone calls, letters and visitors to the garden information center average 25 to 30 a day.

This year the library has remained open during evening classes at the Hall in an effort to be of service to more members. There are also continuing displays of rare books on exhibit so that visitors may appreciate the Society's heritage and enjoy some of the beautiful volumes in the rare book collection.

Various members of the staff represent the Horticultural Society in many ways throughout the local and the horticultural communities. Through lectures, instructions and guidance to other organizations, the Society has helped implement many programs of community and national interest. Most noteworthy, perhaps, was the participation of our former Director, Carlton Lees, in the Gloucester Community Development Corporation's cemetery restoration project, which has become a national model. It resulted in the passage of a bill by the Massachusetts Legislature ruling on procedures for cemetery restoration.

Various staff members served as judges at flower shows, exhibitions, window box contests and a local 4H fair. Membership of the staff in other related organizations, and attendance at meetings and conventions, helps to keep the Society abreast with the rest of the horticultural world.

The Horticultural Society also acts as a placement service. In 1973, 35 gardeners came to us seeking employment and 25 property owners sought gardeners. Ten placements were made.

Awards in recognition of horticultural achievement by the Society numbered 131 for the year 1973. Other organizations and individuals presented 22 awards for exhibits in the 1973 Spring Show.

The Hub Box program, now retitled "Plants Go To School", continues to receive wide interest and support. In 1973, some 400 third and fourth graders became involved in horticulture through the efforts of 26 volunteers visiting Boston public schools; 31 volunteers signed up for the '73-'74 program and have just completed their classroom assignments. The Hub Box Committee is pleased to announce that the project is ready to move out of its experimental phase with the publication of a final instruction and organization manual this fall. The program can then be duplicated in any part of the country.

Forty-five vocational agricultural students participated in an all-day plant identification and judging contest in the 1973 Spring Show. This year, 1974, 63 students participated in the competition. Countless other young people, as well as adults, were acquainted with growing plants at seed planting workshops held on Boston Common for Earth Day festivities in 1973 and 1974. And thousands of women met the Horticultural Society at "Yes We Can", an all-day televised special event at the Hynes Auditorium on January 18, 1974, sponsored by the Governor's Council on the Status of Women and WBZ-TV.

The Kathryn S. Taylor Greenhouse remains an active outpost of the Society, thanks to the efforts of its hard-working Committee. Classes and workshops are conducted at the greenhouse, as well as the very popular spring and fall plant sales held annually.

Open Garden Days in Cambridge and the Dedham-Dover area allowed members an opportunity to visit some outstanding private gardens in the spring of 1973. Also last spring the Society presented a special tour of Frederick Law Olmsted's contributions to the Boston Park System. More recently, tours were offered to the Stone estate in Marion, the Hunnewell estate in Wellesley and the Gardner Museum greenhouses.

One of the most dramatic changes in program occurs in the area of classes and workshops. It is dramatic at least to those of us closely involved with the Society's educational efforts. For the record, I can report that for the 1973 calendar year a total of 425 individuals attended the 18 different classes, courses or workshops offered by the Society. The expansion of our current offerings of this kind can be seen more clearly by comparing statistics from identical time periods for the current academic year and the previous one. During the period from September 1972 through April 1973, an attendance of 237 was recorded for the nine classes and workshops conducted. From September 1973 through April 1974, 579 individuals attended the 30 classes and workshops offered! They were conducted not only in Horticultural Hall and the Taylor Greenhouse, but at such other facilities as instructors' homes, Mount Auburn Cemetery, Habitat in Cambridge and the Georgetown High School. Classes were also held during the evening and on Saturdays.

Mrs. Engle, Trustee and Chairman of the recently appointed Educational Programs Committee, will have more to report on current and future plans for this area of the Society's program.

William J. Thompson
Acting Executive Director

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS COMMITTEE REPORT

Several new Society activities are planned. Because of the all-time high interest in growing plants indoors, a Plant Clinic will be initiated one evening a week in July and August. This fall, the Suburban Experiment Station of the University of Massachusetts is to start a Plant Clinician course to train those working with the public, e.g., nurserymen and plant shop employees; our volunteers may also complete this training, and become an invaluable Society resource for service to the public. Plant Clinics can be held at our main location, at the Spring Show, at any small shows. They have already been held this year

at offices in downtown Boston, due to our affiliation with the Metropolitan Cultural Alliance, and more are in store. People want to learn, they like to talk about plants and their successes or failures. From my experience, there are plenty who need our information and need to know this is not a stuffy institution of expert gardeners.

Planned for the fall in the library, which is a day-in, day-out activity of great importance, are orientation tours. They will acquaint members with the vast and marvelous collections and make the library more useful to them. A similar tour and tea are planned for new members. In this way, the Massachusetts Horticultural Society may become less forbidding and more friendly for the new people. In the fall the library will also feature a Plant of the Month. Visitors will be able to put their names and addresses in a box and, at the end of the month, the name of the lucky winner of the plant will be drawn. The plant's background and culture will be featured in the *Nasturtium* so that those unable to participate in our "lottery" will still be able to learn.

This is just the beginning of a more lively and meaningful Horticultural Society. If you have ideas for courses or people who could teach them, or could volunteer time to small projects like plant clinics or minor exhibitions —say at banks or in our main lobby— or distributing posters to local garden centers, please speak up. It's rewarding, educational, and a great big help.

As Mr. Thompson has outlined, the reason for the Society's existence is education, and one of our strongest vehicles is our course program. This past academic year one of our greatest efforts was to expand the courses, not only in number and scope but also in time and in geographical location. Not everyone is able to attend classes at 10 a.m. in Horticultural Hall; therefore, many of the basic courses were offered in the morning and again in the evening for working people. By and large, they have been very successful. It is planned this coming academic year to expand the evening and geographical factors for the more popular and practical courses. Negotiations are going on with institutions in several locations so that a given basic course, say on vegetables (which rank in all-time public popularity with tennis), may be given by the same instructor in Horticultural Hall, North Shore, Woburn, Waltham and South Shore. It will mean that if you happen to live in Bridgewater or Manchester you won't be deprived of learning just because you are too far away to attend a course, or too tired to struggle into Horticultural Hall.

In an effort to broaden our offerings the Educational Programs Committee has appointed a subcommittee to hammer out the course program. Roughly, the following areas are being handled by people directly involved in them: Outdoor Gardening—Mr. and Mrs. Robert Means; Indoor Gardening —Mrs. Raymond Cronin and myself; Flower Arranging—Mrs. James Grinnell, Mrs. John Herweg, Mrs. Robert Knowles and Mrs. Leo Wolf; Landscape Design—Joseph Hudak; Botany — Mrs. Michael Turchan. These people know what subjects should be taught and who can teach them well, and should be in a position to fashion a course program that will be fantastic.

One further comment on our courses. It is evident that the outside world doesn't know about them, or us. We are attempting to have our courses listed in the Sunday gardening sections of the *Globe* and *Herald American*, along with those of our fellow horticultural groups. In addition, a poster listing the courses is being made every month by Mrs. Henry Littleboy, a member from Beacon Hill. These go to garden centers and plant shops. It is through these efforts and more to come that we will build a market, and make ourselves available to those outside our membership.

Corliss K. (Mrs. Ralph P.) Engle
Chairman, Educational
Programs Committee

SITE COMMITTEE REPORT

One thing which I have noted since delving into the affairs of the Society is the many good friends whom we have all over the countryside and all of whom are anxious to help. Knowing that we were looking for a new site, many of them have been most helpful with their suggestions as to possible locations until I feel that we have a fine dragnet of members, non-members, members of environmental groups and others, all of whom are interested in helping us to find the right location. As I am sure you know from previous correspondence we have been concentrating our efforts about an area west of Boston, centering on the junction of the Massachusetts Turnpike and Route 128, which is not only the center of our membership but also the transportation center of Massachusetts and even of New England.

In all we have had suggested about 40 different locations, all of which have been visited by one or more members of the Site Committee.

There is a wide difference in the sties which we have visited. Some consist of attractive open land, others contain lovely old gardens, some have an assortment of structures varying all the way from residences to the rather imposing structures of the Watertown Arsenal. The question is, how do you decide between such disparate features?

I think we agree pretty well on what an "ideal site" should be: ten to 200 acres with beautiful gardens, trees, plantings, a horticultural gem in its own right. It should have fields, woods, orchard, water with brook and pond, varied topography, be fertile, yet have variety for landscaping including outcroppings for rock gardens. It should have a large, solid brick house which we could use for our offices, a large, air-conditioned wing for a library, with barns and other outbuildings for storage, garden shop, small shows and the like, all arranged for convenience and central control. All should be in fine repair, tight, insulated, easy to heat and maintain. It should be located within ten minutes of the Massachusetts Turnpike and Route 128, and not over one block from an M.B.T.A. station. It should also have protection, and thus be in an area not likely to be overrun in another 74 years. It should have suitable zoning, with neighbors anxious to have us and where our growth and traffic would not harrass the neighborhood. It should, by the way, be owned by a benevolent octogenarian anxious to donate it all to the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, preferably with a large endowment and no strings attached!

Obviously, we are not likely to find a package just like this. Evaluation of real sites is more difficult. We have found that there is a wide disparity in views of Committee members and Society members as to the priorities of these various factors, in that each person sees the function of the Horticultural Society differently; in fact, each person sees horticulture itself in a different manner. These views of course translate into different ideas of what a site should be. The problem, then, is how to decide between disparate views.

Consequently, while we are looking at sites and searching for more, the staff has taken on the job of refining

the site criteria set up by the Program Planning Committee and establishing priorities. In this we are working very closely with Mrs. Engle and her Educational Programs Committee and are attempting to establish a yardstick against which various sites can be tested, and also a process by which the right decision can be made. We must avoid the temptation to grab at a site because it is available, or cheap, or happens to strike the fancy, later to find we are in a dead end with regard to our future operations. Toward this end we have established three categories of priorities. The first covers the essentials, without which we can never fulfill our program and our functions, without which we cannot grow to attract public and financial support; it includes items which, if not present in the site, cannot reasonably be added later at any cost. The second category consists of the highly desirable features, without which opportunities for growth in size and variety of activities and programs must be curtailed, and items which cannot be added later except at inordinate cost or delay. The third category includes the desirable features which we certainly need or want eventually, but which can be added later if the site is adequate to receive them. Obviously, if these features are present originally time and money will be saved, and the transition to a new site will be easier and earlier.

As a check on our plans and our dreams we have been looking into what others are doing in other cities, and have also been studying the operations of many of our local organizations. We have been viewing them from the standpoints of both functions and finances, and have been trying to make estimates with regard to numbers of visitors to be handled and areas of buildings required for our operations, and put these requirements in some order of priority with respect to the logistics of making a move. We have also been investigating possibilities for an appropriate disposition of Horticultural Hall.

These staff studies will of course be subject to the eagle-eyed scrutiny of all concerned, and will hopefully help the Society to make the wise decision. In the meanwhile, we are still looking for ever more possibilities, so if any of you have places to suggest or, better yet, just happen to own that ideal site that I described, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Warren K. Colby
Assistant to the President

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JULY/AUGUST 1974

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1973 Garden Awards

Special Award of Merit:

Miss Rebekah Hobbs, *Boston*
Miss Catharine S. Huntington, *Boston*
Jenney Oil Company, *Chestnut Hill*
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, *Cambridge*
Vose Galleries of Boston

Garden Certificate:

Mrs. Charles Almy, *Cambridge*
Mr & Mrs. Craig Wylie, *Cambridge*

Wakefield Award for the Small Garden:

Mrs. Charles Townsend, *Boston*

Bronze Medal:

The Hebrew Rehabilitation Center for Aged, *Roslindale*

Silver Medal:

Mr. & Mrs. E. Garrett Birkhoff, *Cambridge*

Gold Medal:

Admiral & Mrs. Harry Hull, *Manchester*
Mr. & Mrs. Donald G. Parrot, *Manchester*

1973 Exhibition Awards

The John S. Ames Trophy:

Weston Nurseries, *Hopkinton*

The Albert C. Burrage Gold Vase:

Alexander I. Heimlich, *Woburn*

1973 Medal Awards

Silver Medal:

Nancy Robinson Fitzwater, *Huntington, West Virginia*
Aaron N. Kanouse, *Olympia, Washington*
Joseph Hicks Pyron, *Reynolds, Georgia*
Doris Jeane Watson, *Wilmington, Delaware*

Large Gold Medal:

Robert Fritz Carlson, *East Lansing, Michigan*
Karl Parisette Jones, *Barrington, Rhode Island*
Joseph Wheelock Lund, *Boston, Massachusetts*
Anne Wertsner Wood, *Swarthmore, Pennsylvania*

Jackson Dawson Medal:

LeRoy Judson Stewart, *Ocean Springs, Mississippi*

Thomas Roland Medal:

Ernesta Drinker Ballard, *Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

George Robert White Medal of Honor:

Leon Carleton Snyder, *Excelsior, Minnesota*